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DEPORTATIONS AND PEACE

By Alexander Boeker

When Foreign Minister Bidault, on March 15, stated that the dumping of millions of expelled Germans in overcrowded Western Germany is a threat to French security, he touched upon one of the most dangerous issues confronting the Conference of Foreign Ministers at Moscow.

Secretary Marshall, in dealing with the mass deportations from Eastern Europe, is faced with a virtual fait accompli. All told, some 20 million people, equal to the population of the State of New York and the six New England States, were scheduled for uprooting. They consist of three million Poles from Eastern Poland; 11 million Germans from Eastern Germany, Danzig and Poland; four million Hungarians and Sudeten-Germans from Czechoslovakia; two million German-speaking citizens of Hungary, Yugoslavia and Romania. The vast majority of these have already been expelled. Millions have been carried off into forced labor, and countless numbers have perished.

Much of what has been done can therefore never be undone. At Moscow, however, the issue is to sanction these proceedings and to guarantee the status quo resulting from the expulsions. It will be dangerous for the United States to accede. It will be difficult to refuse.

The United States Government, as Mr. Molotov pointed out to Mr. Byrnes in his statement of September 16, 1946, is by no means entirely innocent of the dilemma in which it finds itself. When first practiced by Hitler and Stalin, during the period of their honeymoon, compulsory "population transfers" were condemned as criminal and illegal. But when elements within the Polish and Czechoslovak Governments-in-Exile advocated similar measures as a means of "solving" their territorial and minority problems, they received a large measure of encouragement from Mr. Roosevlt and Mr. Churchill.

Finally, under the massive impact of Soviet victories, the Western leaders at Yalta and Potsdam agreed to deportations of greater magnitude than any so far suggested by the most expert advocatus diaboli. By insisting that some of these arrangements should be only provisional, the United States and Britain left the door open for later modification, but forfeited the chance of making a stand on principle.

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The best that can be said of American policy in this matter of the deportations is that it has been ambiguous and inconsistent. At Potsdam, in July, 1945, President Truman agreed to the forced migration of millions of people. Simultaneously Justice Robert H. Jackson, of the United States Supreme Court, was drafting the Nuremberg indictment against the Nazi leaders. Count Three, Section J, of this indictment reads:

> "In certain occupied territories, purportedly annexed to Germany, the defendants . . . endeavored to obliterate the former national character of these territories. In pursuance of these plans and endeavors, the defendants forcibly deported inhabitants who were predominantly non-German and introduced thousands of German colonists."

A representative of the judicial branch of the Administration thus went on record as condemning as a punishable crime the selfsame action which the executive branch was in process of committing. Inconsistency continued. General W. Bedell Smith, American delegate to the Paris Peace Conference, declared on September 6, 1946, with reference to the expulsion of Hungarians from Slovakia, that such action was "repugnant and unacceptable" to the United States. Meanwhile General Clay, on November 26, 1945, had signed an agreement providing for the deportation of three and one half million Germans by the Polish Provisional Government. Though supposedly implementing the Potsdam Declaration, he thus incidentally agreed to the evacuation of Germans from Polish-occupied Eastern Germany, though the Potsdam document speaks only of "transfer . . . of German populations . . . remaining in Poland."

Bewilderment caused by such contradictory policies is increased by a sublime disregard of statistical accuracy. For instance, President Truman, returning from Potsdam, announced on August 12, 1945, that the number of people to be expelled was "only about a million and a half," whereas the agreement of November 26, 1945, signed by General Clay, provided for the deportation of 3.5 million. As it turned out, even that latter figure was a gross underestimate.

One cannot help wondering whether the juggling with figures that has accompanied the expulsion policy is the result of Administration ignorance, or of a desire to conceal. Certainly the American people would not have reacted so placidly to this measure had they known the full story. Said Anne O'Hare McCormick in the New York Times of November 13, 1946:

> "If Allied statesmen had imagined how heavily this wandering mass of helpless people would beat upon themselves, they couldn't have assumed so casually the moral and historic responsibility for the most inhuman decision ever made by governments dedicated to the defense of human rights."

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If American and British statesmen were actually unaware of the long-range implications of this program of annexations and expulsions, the same will not be said of the leaders of Soviet Russia.

Having gained the Curzon Line, thus absorbing vast areas of purely Polish territory, the Kremlin insisted on a "friendly," i.e. a Communist-controlled Polish government, which alone would be submissive enough to surrender historic Polish provinces. The Polish puppets, by way of compensation, were awarded one-fifth of Germany, to which they had no better claim than Hitler would have had to Holland or Belgium.

If the time comes for a German treaty to be signed, we shall find that only a Communist German government will be "friendly" enough to acquiesce in permanent surrender of such German provinces as Silesia, Pomerania and East Prussia. Alternatively, a future German government could be bribed from Moscow by the return of lost provinces.

The seed of permanent discord has thus been planted between the German and Polish peoples; just as Germany and Czechoslovakia have been irreparably estranged by the expulsion of the Sudeten-Germans. In consequence, both Poland and Czechoslovakia will henceforth have to cling to Soviet Russia for fear of losing their ill-gotten gains, and the Germans will be forever tempted to make a deal with Russia that will restore to them what they have lost.

Meanwhile, the presence of more than ten million destitute deportees in rump-Germany constitutes a potent pacemaker of Communism. By competing with the inhabitants of rump-Germany for the desperately short supply of food, housing, consumer goods and jobs, those expelled persons drag down living conditions to what former President Hoover described after his recent investigation as "the lowest level known in a hundred years of Western history."

If present arrangements stand, one out of every four or five Germans will be an expelled person, homeless, propertyless, hopeless and consequently ever ready to join the most extreme movement. Under these conditions it is idle to speak of the restoration of German democracy.

Nor is there much better prospect of making Germany economically self-supporting without her food-bearing provinces in the East—unless it be by an export program of such proportions as will produce a head-on clash with Anglo-Saxon commercial interests, thus driving Germany the more surely into the Soviet camp.

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Bismarck once said that the greatness of a statesman can be measured by his readiness to admit and correct mistakes. This might well serve as a motto to American and British leaders as they confront the Russian spokesmen at Moscow.

Death and desolation will not be redeemed by frank admission that principles solemnly proclaimed as war aims, applicable to victor and vanquished alike, have been violated regarding both Polish ex-allies and German ex-enemies. Such a statement, however, might instill new vigor into democratic ideals and into America's determination that peace shall be more than a period of exhaustion between hostilities.

But any such admission, almost forced by the unconcealable facts, would be an empty gesture if it were not accompanied by a determined attempt to bring political practice into line. Despite the mistakes of the past, there is still a wide field for effective redress. Many of the displaced persons, especially from the Balkans, may never be able to return to their homes because new waves of migrations have closed in over their villages and towns. But vast stretches of once prosperous country, now deserted and unproductive, are still waiting to receive back the populations that once tilled the soil and worked the factories.

There are many Czechs who see that the nationalistic fanatics who drove out a quarter of their citizenry have harmed their country as much as did Louis XIV when he expelled the Huguenots from France. Many a Pole likewise has seen that his country has nothing to gain by possessing deserted provinces at the price of total vassalage to Russia.

To any move to cancel the deportations, Mr. Molotov would no doubt object, as he did at Paris on September 16, 1946, that:

> "the very thought of such an experiment carried out on millions of people seems to be unbelievable, not to say anything about its cruelty to the Poles as well as even to the Germans themselves."

Certainly the Russians have a point there. It is difficult to understand how Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, in view of the ideals they professed, could have consented to this shunting about of millions of human beings. But to give that mistake the seal of national approval would be a worse, because a permanent, blunder. Throughout its history the United States has stood for the defense of elementary human rights. To repudiate that principle is to repudiate America.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. IV, NO. 12

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By Frank C. Hanighen March 19, 1947

The forcefulness of President Truman's speech to Congress on foreign policy surprised some observers who expected the President to "play it slow and soft." A maxim of Talleyrand came to mind: "Il faut frapper trop fort parfois, pour frapper juste"—"One should strike too strongly at times, in order to strike just right." The ready agreement of Congressional leaders to rush consideration of the Greek and Turkish credits certainly showed that Truman, whatever the long-range wisdom of his course, had acted effectively; and his handling of the matter suggests some shrewd political calculation.

There was more to the presentation of the issue than meets the eye. According to a story which comes to us from a reliable source, the Greek crisis was precipitated not by the British notice that they were withdrawing financial support, but by a secret intelligence report which reached London and Washington. The report said that Tito was preparing to overrun the Yugoslav-Greek border, an action which would have been timed to coincide with a Greek Communist uprising. Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormack seems to have referred to this report in her March 14 column in the New York Times: "What impelled Mr. Truman to act so quickly on the Greek crisis may be revealed by Balkan developments. Undoubtedly threats of a coup hastened the course of events."

If the above story be true, the British notice was not the sole cause of the crisis. It is easy to see why the aid of the UN was not invoked. If aggression was really believed to be imminent, it would have been the duty of Britain and the United States to place the matter before the UN Security Council in a full-dress attempt to prevent a threat to peace. But in that case, as experience has shown, these Powers would have been confronted with the immovable barrier of the Russian veto. Obviously, the UN would have at least stalled if not prevented the plans for the American assumption of the British responsibility in Greece. Dealing with the matter unilaterally clearly offered fewer obstacles.

In short, in this critical test of international relations, the United States Government dismissed the machinery of UN as useless. This is an inescapable conclusion, although it is not one upon which commentators like to dwell. The fact is that for a long time UN, as a means for maintaining international peace, has been strongly discounted by observers, and by the more informed members of the Government. Few have the courage to say so openly, for the reason that propaganda has built up the prestige of UN to extravagant proportions in the public mind; and doubt cast on its value constitutes commission of the crime of "isolationism." The UN was oversold to the public and a conspiracy of silence has maintained a fictitious estimate of its real worth.

HUMAN EVENTS early sought to pierce this wall of propaganda in an article by Felix Morley, on October 18, 1944, on the UN Charter (then called the Dumbarton Oaks Plan). Mr. Morley's criticism of the draft and pessimism about its operation drew many letters of protest, but today his fears appear as all too justified: ". . . the Dumbarton Oaks formula as yet makes no provision for checking possible aggression on the part of the four permanent Council members. As matters stand, Russia, for instance, would never be an aggressor because Moscow could always veto any judicial attempt to define her as such. In this respect the Old League Covenant, though weak, is far superior to the present draft."

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Here and There—Republican inner circles place some of the blame for the decrease in Republican prestige on the public relations department of that party's National Headquarters in Washington. Obviously, in the past few months, the Repub-

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licans have not done well in the running polemical duel with the Democrats. Mr. William C. Murphy, head of the publicity department at the Connecticut Avenue headquarters, has been the target of much criticism. Murphy was a first-class bureau chief for the Philadelphia Inquirer during the past decade. But he is said to lack the requisite militancy which such a job demands. Chairman B. Carroll Reece is reportedly aware of the situation and is seeking a newspaperman who possesses the qualities necessary for successfully—and constantly—battering the Democratic defenses. He would, it is understood, supplement rather than supplant Mr. Murphy.

—Some financial observers wonder why the Administration has asked for a credit, out of current appropriations, instead of a loan for Turkey. Unlike Greece, Turkey is a going concern, with considerable resources, a budding industry, a promising economy and, since World War I, a good financial record. A loan to Turkey might be a good risk, stands a good chance of being repaid, meanwhile would draw interest and would ease the task of the budget balancers on the Hill.

—A friend just returned from a tour of Germany reports that the Germans refer to articles bought on the black market as "UNRRA" thus: "I have bought a pair of shoes UNRRA."

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However stoutly Molotov may wrangle at the Conference table in Moscow, and however furiously Izvestia may storm at "the Hitlerite tactics of Truman," Russia is leading from weakness. Its economy is obviously strained and food conditions are serious, with famine reported within 150 miles of the Soviet capital. But the Soviet weakness is more apparent in the periphery of satellite States. Russia has been draining these States of wealth, with resultant deterioration in the living conditions and unrest. The Kremlin wishes to maintain its political hold in these areas, yet is in no position to give economic help when distress develops.

Russia, therefore, has sought to tap American help. In the past few months, the Czechoslovakian and Hungarian Governments have sought economic aid of various sorts. Romania and, very recently, Yugoslavia plead for food. On March 10, Oscar Lange, delegate from Poland to the UN, made a bid for an American loan for his country. At the same time, Polish underground sources—we learn—sent word to ship no food to Poland, which they say has plenty until the next harvest. Finally, it is privately reported to this column that the USSR has furnished gold to the Romanian Government for purchase of grain from Argentina. In view of this developing pattern, talk arises about the need for another Hoover mission, to determine what is needed in these areas and—of no less importance—on what terms it should be given.

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Among those who poise their pencils over the score card of Presidential aspirants, the boom for Senator (formerly Governor) Baldwin of Connecticut has caused quite a flutter of speculation. They agree that the news is by no means pleasing to Dewey supporters nor, conversely, displeasing to the Taft advocates. Connecticut is no Taft area, but Albany has staked some claims there. Baldwin may turn out to be no more than a "favorite son," but such minor celebrities can sometimes swing their delegations. In this case, it might not be in Dewey's direction, at least in the early heats.

For it has not gone unnoticed that Baldwin has always been a faithful follower of the late Wendell Willkie. There may be significance in the fact that Fortune, which is host to the Baldwin debut, first disclosed the "barefoot boy from Wall Street" to the unsuspicious gaze of rank-and-file Republicans in the annum mirabile 1940. Dopesters are inclined to pair Baldwin with Stassen, that other upholder of

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the Willkie tradition. Presidential mates—Baldwin from the East and Stassen from the West—a possible combination.

Meanwhile, talk about Speaker of the House Joe Martin complicates the picture. It pours no water on Senator Cabot Lodge's wheel. Martin is reported to have won the influential approval of Editor Charles Merz of the New York Times. If this Martin boom "spirals," then it should split New England—the North for the Speaker, the South for Baldwin-Stassen. But wasn't the Northeast regarded as "safe" for the New York Governor?

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The Supreme Court decision, March 17, on the Friedman case in effect upholds the right of the Civil Service Commission to discharge an employee on grounds of sympathy with Communism. This word from the High Bench should facilitate the purge of Communists and fellow travellers from the Government bureaucracy. But it is a little known fact that a quiet purge of these elements has been going on rather widely for some months, with the aid of the FBI, which has done a good job in locating domestic centers of infection. The procedure has been discreet, unaccompanied by any papers of expulsion; protests from those accused; appeals to the civil Service Commission. Heads of departments take those known to be in this category aside and say "Now, we think it best that you resign and leave without any fuss. It is best for you and for us. If you do not, however, we shall dismiss you, and if you appeal, we are prepared to fight the case through." In almost all cases, it is said, the procedure results in prompt resignation. Many would rather seek private jobs without the handicap of the publicity which would follow their attempt to keep their Government positions.

A financial expert sends us his prescription for our economic ills: "The public debt will become more and more the problem child. Its magnitude—$260 billions—is such that most analyses falter for lack of sufficient imagination. By all standards, such an amount of indebtedness is unprecedented in history.

"But its numerical importance is less disturbing than the hands that hold it. A too considerable part of it is floating unconsolidated, and by far too great an amount is "monetized"—that is, immediately convertible into currency, like War Savings bonds. Here, indeed, lies the real trouble-center of tomorrow. It should be demonetized; that part of it which is short term should be diminished, instead of increased; and it should be placed in the hands of more reliable and less temperamental holders.

"Such a process would cost the Government more money. The current fixed charges of carrying the Government debt is about $5 billion. To carry it in a more manageable way would cost about 25 per cent or 30 per cent additional. The revamping of our public debt, involving these additional charges, should be accomplished today, while our economy is booming. The premium to be paid in form of higher service charges may look important to budget balancers now. But one day that may well appear as a trifle compared to the unpredictable damage it might inflict on the economic structure not only of our country but of the whole world, if it were left as it is. The present debt situation in the last analysis might lead to tinkering with the currency, and wildcat inflation, with dangerous social consequences.

"Our country is apparently entering the path of imperial policy. Unfortunately this historic step is taken just at a time when we are attempting to return to sound financial practices, such as the balanced budget. We talk of already making payments and reducing the debt. But the redemption of the debt should be preceded by the solution of the problem of its consolidation and "demonetization."

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Notes and Quotes

A prevision of England's present fate came to a young Oxford graduate, Arnold Toynbee, in 1911, and eventually led to the writing of his A Study of History, in which he diagnoses the illnesses of empires and civilizations. "A Study of Toynbee," in the London Horizon (January) describes the intellectual education of the foremost historian of today.

"At the end of 1911—he was now twenty-two—he went for a nine-month tour of Greece, travelling on foot in Crete and the Athos peninsula. . . . Once, as he turned the corner of a mountain at the eastern end of Crete, he stumbled on the ruins of an eighteenth-century villa built by a Venetian grandee just before the hold of Venice on the island gave way to the Turks'. Analysing the strange sensation he had as he successfully 'placed' the building, he realized that although this was a piece of modern western architecture, built here by western hands, it seemed precisely as dead, as remote less than two centuries after its demise, as the Minoan palaces at Cnossos and Phaestus which he had been inspecting a few days previously.

"So 'thalassocrats,' [Sea Powers] he reflected in his Anglo-Greek terminology, shared death in common when separated by three thousand years," and some lines of Browning "had by now brought nineteenth-century England to his mind, aligning a third 'thalassocracy' with the others; for if Venice had managed to keep her grip on Crete for four and a half centuries, that was at any rate longer than his own country had yet ruled over the earliest of her dominions. He felt a chill in the atmosphere of his baroque ruin; it was a memento mori for Britannia as much as for the Doge and Minos."

The next great step in the Toynbee education came after World War I, when he came to realize that in addition to the fate of England, the fate of all Western civilization was in doubt, a new thought indeed in those days. "In the historians of the nineteenth century there must have been something radically inaccurate—their visions of history as a single track mounting, . . ." He had not then read Spengler, but at the Peace Conference of 1919-20 he entertained the proposition that Western society, like societies of the past, could disappear.

Mr. Tangye Lean compares Toynbee's reflections at this time to those expressed in an essay of the French writer Paul Valery: "Here . . . we are shown the culture of the West as a doomed liner from which we can see the wrecks of previous vessels scattered on the ocean floor, and see them no longer with the blase curiosity of sightseers but as passengers on a sister-ship whose sirens have just announced that we shall join them." Due to the labors of archaeologists, the modern world could count the number of these wrecks.

Mere counting, however, was "the least of the possibilities in this situation that struck Toynbee. What was needed after a count was a reconstruction of the courses before shipwreck, an analysis of the crucial errors which sent them down, a sorting to discover whether it was the same kind of reef they had all struck. A chart of this kind could do two things: it could give an indication, but perhaps no more, of the point in our course which we had reached; more certainly by ringing round the fatal errors, it could tell us what corrections to make in our course—if there was still time to make any—before we joined the forerunners who had gone blindly down.

"It is fair to present the genesis of A Study of History in this purposive light. Besides being a man of his generation impatient at the sterilities of detached academicism, Toynbee is profoundly a moralist and Christian, determined in a crisis to help his fellow men. . . . Faced by the more massive threat of a collapse in civilization, his desire to save his fellow-men alive if possible, and to save their souls if it is not."

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